(d). if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Volume-I of the final Report, which deals with simplification and streamlininig of Customs and Central Excise laws and procedures, contains in all 142 recommendations. The main recommendations made in the Report relate to tariff structure (not the rate of duty), valuation, classification assessment clearance, warehousing, exports, drawback, MODVAT, appellate machinery settlement commission, bond, refund, audit etc. For convenience of reference: a few copies of the Report have been placed in the Parliament House Library.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The recom mendation is acceptable.

mBusting of sales taxe evasion packet

483. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Indian Express dated 19.11.93 captioned Sales Tax evasion racket busted; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; and what necessary action has been taken thereon by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY) : (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Rise in wholesale price index

484. SHRI MENTAY PADMANA-BHAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the annual inflation rate based on the rise in whole Price Index during the week ending 6th November, 1993 is the highest in 45 weeks at 8.44 per cent;

(b) what are the reasons for this significant rise in inflation rate; and

(c) whether any steps are likely to be taken to reduce the burden on middle and poor classes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) (a) Yes, Sir, it reckoned on provisional data so far available.

(b) Reasons for rise in inflation rate are;

—Sharp uptrend in primary commodity prices due to higher support/ procurement price to 'farmers.

—Revision in issue price for PDS.

—Revision in electricity rate by many of the SEBs.

—Truckers strike twice in the year.

—Relaxation in fiscal discipline.

(c) The principal instrument for moderating the prices of essential commodities is through the Govern ment's intervention in supply manage ment of sensitive commodities (which constitutes) wage goods for the poor er classes) such as rice, wheat, edible oils and sugar. Apart from increas ing the allocation for PDS, the gov ernment has also allowed open mar ket sales of wheat to moderate the market prices. The Government has also permitted imports of edible oils as a result of which rise in edible